(G) Demands have been received from various quarters/VIPs for setting up of new Zonal Headquarters at following locations:—

	Zone	State
1.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat
2.	Ajmer	Rajasthan
3.	Amritsar	Punjab
4.	Calicut	Kerala
5.	Cannanore	Kerala
6.	Cochin	Kerala
7.	Dhanbad	Jharkhand
8.	Dharwad	Karnataka
9	Gandhidham	Gujarat
10.	Gandhinagar	Gujarat
11.	Jammu	Jammu & Kashmir
12.	Nagpur	Maharashtra
13.	Thiruvananthapuram	Kerala
14.	Vadodara	Gujarat

(d) New Railway Zones are set up keeping in view the factors like size, workload, accessibility, traffic pattern and other administrative/ operational requirements consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency and not on regional considerations. The proposals for creation of new Zones, when seen in the light of these considerations, have not been found operationally feasible.

Doubling of Porbander-Ahmedabad rail line

541. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR RUPANI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that people of Porbandar, the birth place of Mahatma Gandhi, are facing many difficulties and have to spend 10 to 11 hours to reach Ahmedabad, the other place having the memories of Gandhiji due to non-availability of double railway track though the distance between two historical places is only 400 kms. approximately;

(b) whether Government are considering any proposal to set-up a double railway tracks between these two historical cities; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Doubling of single line section/providing multiple lines on double line sections is taken up when their carrying capacity is saturated. The traffic on the suggested section has not yet reached the level to justify its doubling.

However, on Ahmedabad-Jamnagar-Porbander line, double broad gauge line already exists on Ahmedabad-Viramgam section and a survey for doubling of Viramgam-Surendranagar section has been sanctioned during 2006-07 to assess the traffic on this section.

Dilapidated Rail Bridges

542. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the break-up of the old railway bridges, age-wise;

(b) how many of them have outlived their original life;

(c) whether it is a fact that Chief Commissioner Railway Safety has raised doubts over sustainability of ageing bridges in its report;

(d) whether Railway propose to abandon such bridges;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) what steps are being taken to replace such bridges;

(g) if so, what would be the cost of building new bridges; and

(h) how is the Special Railway Safety Fund being utilized for renewing or strengthening the bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) There are approximately 1,27,000 Railway bridges on Indian Railways. The age-wise break up is as under:

(1) More than 100 years old - 51,340

(2) More than 80 years old - 75,600

(3) More than 60 years old - 90,387

(b) The life of Railway Bridges is not dependent on their age but is based on their physical condition as ascertained through various inspections and on operational lines the bridges are in serviceable condition.